

## **Municipal Solid Waste**

- Municipal solid waste (MSW), more commonly known as trash, comprises various items we commonly throw away. These items include packaging, food, grass clippings, sofas, computers, tires and refrigerators. This definition does not include materials that also may be disposed in non-hazardous landfills, but are not generally considered MSW, including: construction and demolition (C&D) debris; municipal wastewater treatment sludges; and non-hazardous industrial wastes. (Facts and Figures report)
- MSW is a subset of solid waste and is defined as durable goods (e.g. appliances, tires, batteries) nondurable goods (e.g. newspaper, books, magazines), containers and packaging, food wastes, yard trimmings and miscellaneous organic waste from residential, commercial and industrial non-process sources. (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) 2014 Orientation Manual)

## **Recycling Definitions (EPA)**

- Recycling is defined as the recovery of useful materials, such as paper, glass, plastic and metals, from the municipal solid waste (MSW), along with the transformation of the materials, to make new products to reduce the amount of virgin materials needed to meet consumer demands. (Facts and Figures Report)
- Recycling is defined as the recovery of materials, such as paper, glass, plastic, metals, construction and demolition (C&D) material and organics from the waste stream (e.g., municipal solid waste), along with the transformation of materials, to make new products and reduce the amount of virgin raw materials needed to meet consumer demand. (Recycling Economic Information Report).
- Recycling is the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and turning them into new products. Recycling can benefit your community and the environment. (EPA Recycling website)
- Recycling is a series of activities that includes collecting used, reused, or unused items that would otherwise be considered waste; sorting and processing the recyclable products into raw materials; and remanufacturing the recycled raw materials into new products. Consumers provide the last link in recycling by purchasing products made from recycled content. Recycling also can include composting of food scraps, yard trimmings, and other organic materials. (EPA non-hazardous waste management hierarchy)
- MSW recycling refers to the separation and collection of wastes, their subsequent transformation or remanufacture into usable or marketable products or materials, and the purchase of products made from recyclable materials. (RCRA 2014 Orientation Manual)
- Recycling refers to the series of activities by which discarded materials are collected, sorted, processed and converted into raw materials and are used in the production of new products. *Excludes* the use of these materials as fuel substitutes or for energy production (EPA's archived

Recycling Measurement Guide and adapted from National Recycling Coalition, 1995/State Measurement Program).

### **Recycling Definitions (non-EPA)**

- Recycling is a series of activities in which material is processed into specification-grade commodities and consumed as raw material feedstock, in lieu of virgin materials, in the manufacture of new products. The series of activities that make up recycling include the collection, processing, brokering and subsequent consumption of industrial, end-of-life and obsolete scrap, as well as the process of transforming used products, whole or in part, into reusable commodities. (Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries)
- Recycling is the collection, sorting, marketing, processing and transforming or remanufacturing of recyclable materials and recycled products, including marketing thereof; and the purchase and use of recycling products. (Solid Waste Association of North America)
- Recycling is a series of activities by which material that has reached the end of its current use is processed into material utilized in the production of new products. (National Recycling Coalition)